

## **SUMMARY OF U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS' PUBLIC SCOPING PROCESS OHIO RIVER MAINSTEM SYSTEM STUDY (ORMSS)**

These materials summarize comments received during the scoping process for the Cumulative Effects Assessment (CEA) of the USACE Ohio River Main Stem System Study (ORMSS) during Summer 2001. An important first step in developing a large-scale environmental impact statement, scoping is mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act whenever major federal actions can significantly affect the quality of the environment. Scoping creates opportunities for the public, agencies and other groups to provide input on potential issues related to a proposed project. By identifying significant environmental issues and potential alternatives, the scoping process will influence development of the CEA.

### **SUMMARY OF ORMSS SCOPING PROCESS**

Scoping for the CEA began with publication of a notice in the Federal Register on June 26, 2001. It also was publicized through a press release announcing the CEA scoping process and inviting comments, a mailing to all addressees on the ORMSS mailing list, and legal ads in major regional newspapers. Interested parties also were encouraged to provide written comments or submit questions to the CEA Project Manager at USACE Louisville District by regular mail or e-mail ([celrl-ormss@usace.army.mil](mailto:celrl-ormss@usace.army.mil)) by August 31, 2001. Information about the CEA also was available on the project web site: <http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/ormss/>. Additionally, a color brochure was developed and provided to those who attended the public meetings and to others upon request.

A series of six public scoping meetings (one set in each state along the Ohio River) was held during Summer 2001. Each set consisted of a daytime meeting with governmental agencies and an evening meeting open to the public. Meetings were scheduled as follows:

July 10, 2001 - Banterra Bank, Metropolis, IL  
July 12, 2001 - Victory Theater, Evansville, IN  
July 31, 2001 - Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council, Parkersburg, WV  
August 1, 2001 - Community College of Beaver Co., Monaca, PA  
August 6, 2001 - Kenton Co. Public Library, Covington, KY  
August 7, 2001 - Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, OH

Forty-four people attended the six meetings with agency representatives. More than half the participants represented federal and state resource or regulatory agencies. The remaining participants represented various public agencies or business interests.

A total of 141 people signed in at the six public meetings. Nearly 50 percent of the participants were interested citizens. Approximately 25 percent represented business or development interests, with the largest representation from the shipping industry. The remaining participants included fishermen, elected officials, and representatives of environmental groups, the media and government agencies.

Questionnaires also were available at the meetings and online. Nineteen completed questionnaires were submitted. Additionally, written comments received during scoping consisted of several personal and agency letters and e-mail messages. By late summer, 24 written responses had been received.

### **ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING SCOPING**

The accompanying table summarizes issues that emerged during scoping and indicates the number of related comments. A more detailed summary of the USACE's scoping process will be part of the Cumulative Effects Assessment when it is completed.